

FORM PTO-1390		U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE	ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER 4495-025
TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US) CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371			U.S. APPLICATION NO. (if known, see 37 CFR 1.5) 10/009637
INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. PCT/JP00/01903	INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE 28 March 2000 (28.03.2000)	PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED 15 June 1999 (15.06.1999)	
TITLE OF INVENTION ADVERTISING SYSTEM AND METHOD USING ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS			
APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US Hiroaki NAGANO			
Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This is a FIRST submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371. 2. <input type="checkbox"/> This is a SECOND or SUBSEQUENT submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371. 3. <input type="checkbox"/> This express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)) at any time rather than delay examination until the expiration of the applicable time limit set in 35 U.S.C. 371(b) and PCT Articles 22 and 39(1). 4. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A proper Demand for International Preliminary Examination was made by the 19th month from the earliest claimed priority date. 5. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau). b. <input type="checkbox"/> has been transmitted by the International Bureau. c. <input type="checkbox"/> Is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US) 6. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A English translation of the International Application into English (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> is attached hereto b. <input type="checkbox"/> has been previously submitted under 35 U.S.C. 154 371 (c)(2) 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <input type="checkbox"/> are transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau). b. <input type="checkbox"/> have been transmitted by the International Bureau. c. <input type="checkbox"/> have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendment has NOT expired. d. <input type="checkbox"/> have not been made and will not be made. 8. <input type="checkbox"/> A English translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)). 9. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)). 10. <input type="checkbox"/> A English translation of the annexes to the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)). 			
Items 11. to 20. below concern other document(s) or information included:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. 12. <input type="checkbox"/> An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included. 13. <input type="checkbox"/> A FIRST preliminary amendment. 14. <input type="checkbox"/> A SECOND or SUBSEQUENT preliminary amendment. 15. <input type="checkbox"/> A substitute specification. 16. <input type="checkbox"/> A change of power of attorney and/or address letter. 17. <input type="checkbox"/> A computer-readable form of the sequence listing in accordance with PCT Rule 13ter.2 and 35 U.S.C. 1.821-1.825 18. <input type="checkbox"/> A second copy of the published international application under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4) 19. <input type="checkbox"/> A second copy of the English language translation of the international application under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4) 20. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other items or information. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. PCT/IB/301 - Notification Of Receipt Of Record Copy 			

U.S. APPLIC. NO. (if known, see 37 CFR 1.5) <div style="font-size: 1.5em; font-weight: bold;">10/009637</div>	INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. <div style="font-weight: bold;">PCT/JP00/01903</div>	ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER <div style="font-weight: bold;">4495-025</div>
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21. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> - The following fees are submitted: <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> Basic National Fee (37 CFR 1.492(a)(1)-(5)): Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO and International Search Report not prepared by the EPO or JPO \$ 1040.00 International Search fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but International Search Report prepared by the EPO and JPO \$ 890.00 International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO \$ 740.00 International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) but all claims did not satisfy provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) \$ 710.00 International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) And all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(2)-(4) \$ 100.00 <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 10px;"> ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT = </div> </div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"> CALCULATIONS PTO USE ONLY </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; margin-top: 5px;"></div>
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Surcharge of \$130.00 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(e)).				\$.00
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CLAIMS	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE		
Total Claims	8 - 20 =	0	X \$18.00	\$	0.00
Independent Claims	2 - 3 =	0	X \$84.00	\$	0.00
Multiple dependent claim(s) (if applicable)			+ \$280.00	\$	0.00
TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =				\$	890.00

<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant claims small entity status. See 37 CFR 1.27. The fees indicated above are reduced by ½.	\$	445.00
SUBTOTAL =		\$ 445.00

Processing fee of \$130.00 for furnishing the English translation later than the <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(f)).				\$	0.00
TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =		\$ 445.00			

Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31). \$40.00 per property				\$	0.00
TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =		\$ 445.00			

	Amount to be:	\$
	refunded	
	charged	\$

a. ☐ A check in the amount of \$ XXX.XX to cover the above fees is enclosed.

b. ☐ Please charge my Deposit Account No. XXX in the amount of \$ XXX to cover the above fees. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

c. ☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 07-1337. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

c. ☒ Fees are to be charged to a credit card **WARNING:** information on this form may be public. **Credit card information should not be included on this form.** Provide credit card information and authorization on PTO-2038.

NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.

SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

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37,093

REGISTRATION NUMBER

5/p.1

ADVERTISING SYSTEM AND METHOD USING ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

1. TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to an advertising system using electronic communications, such
5 as the Internet and communication satellites.

2. BACKGROUND ART

One type of advertising that employs the Internet and that is well known in the art is a "banner
advertisements," which is placed on Web pages.

One system for more efficiently providing such advertising data as banner ads to users is
10 described in Japanese unexamined Patent Application Publication No. H10-240828. This
system is an advertisement delivery service system capable of dynamically providing users
advertising data corresponding to their needs when required. This system includes (1) CD-
ROMs on which have been recorded service data, such as graphic data and advertising data
from service sponsors, with the CD-ROMs being distributed to a plurality of users as a
15 communications application program; (2) control-data transmitting means that access an
information center server from the CD-ROM through terminal operations and that obtains
data for controlling the communication application program from the information center server.
The system is configured to provide users with advertising data from the information center
server. The advertising data conforms to static attribute data, such as the user's address, age,
20 and the like, and dynamic needs obtained by the control-data transmitting means based on
real-time access frequency listed in the user's dynamic log data.

Another Internet advertising system is described in Japanese unexamined Patent Application
Publication No. H9-259189. This conventional-document advertising/sales system uses an
online data-provision system, such as the Internet, to enable users to view the tables of
25 contents in magazines and to quickly obtain desired articles from the magazines via e-mail.
The fees for the articles are billed electronically. This system includes (1) a scanner for

reading combined picture and text image data from the covers and tables of contents in
magazines and other printed materials into a client computer connected to a network; (2) an
electronic typesetting-data-inputting device for reading as text data electronic typesetting
data such as the printed text data in the tables of contents and the like; a data transfer means
5 for compressing data read from the scanner or electronic typesetting-data-inputting device
and transferring the data to a server; (3) electronic delivery means for transmitting faxes or
e-mail via the server or separate servers; (4) data-transfer means for transferring order data
to the client computer of a publications dealer, based on customer accesses of data
transferred to the server; and (5) an online billing system that electronically settles charges
10 for customer orders based on instructions from the dealer. The charges are settled online
between the customer's bank and the dealer's bank. Accordingly, this system can use an
electronic means to transmit articles in digital form from magazines and other publications to
a customer, based on a customer order, or it can deliver the printed matter containing the
article ordered by the customer. The system can then settle the bill for the purchased article
15 electronically.

The conditional system described above enables an advertising sponsor to provide
advertising data according to user needs. However, this conventional system is problematic
in that it is impossible to confirm whether the user has actually accessed the advertising data.
Further, the conventional system described above employs a method of guaranteeing the
20 amount of exposure of the advertising data. Accordingly, advertisement sponsors must pay
advertising fees to the company that owns the advertising-data managing system, regardless
of whether the user actually accesses the advertising data. Such a system cannot adapt to
sponsors who wish to provide advertising data under a limited budget.

In view of the foregoing, it is an object of the present invention to provide an advertising
25 system and method employing such electronic communications as the Internet and
communication satellites, with the system and method being capable of determining whether
a user actually accesses supplied advertising data, while accommodating advertisement
sponsors who wish to provide advertising data under a limited budget.

3. DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

The above objects of the present invention will be attained by an advertising system that uses electronic communications and that is comprised of: (1) terminal means for allowing a user to input personal data for registration in an interactive format; (2) personal-data storage means
5 connected to the terminal means for storing the personal data that is input from the terminal means; (3) advertising-data input means for inputting advertising data; (4) advertising-data storage means connected to the advertising-data input means for storing the advertising data that is input from the advertising-data input means; (5) advertising-data extraction means for extracting advertising data conforming to personal data of the user from advertising data
10 stored in the advertising-data storage means, based on personal data of the user stored in the personal-data storage means; (6) advertising-data transmission means for transmitting the advertising data that is extracted by the advertising-data extraction means to the terminal means of the user via electronic communications; (7) advertising-data notification means for notifying the user that advertising data has been transmitted from the advertising-data
15 transmission means; (8) display means for displaying, according to access directions by the user, advertising data that is notified by the advertising-data notification means; (9) advertising-data identification/counting means for (a) identifying each item of advertising data that is displayed on the display means according to the access directions, and (b) counting the number of directions given to access each item of advertising data; and (10) advertising-
20 fee calculation/notification means for (a) calculating advertising fees, based on the number of access directions for each item of advertising data counted by the advertising-data identification/counting means and (b) notifying the sponsor of each item of advertising data of the advertising fees so calculated.

The present invention's advertising system can further comprise (1) point-number
25 management means for converting the number of directions for accessing each item of advertising data counted by the advertising-data identification/counting means into a point number and for accumulating and updating the point number for each user; (2) point-number storage means for sorting and storing the point number that have been updated by the point-number management means for each user; and (3) point-service notification means for

notifying the users of the point number stored in the point-number storage means and of a variety of service data based on the point number.

The present invention's advertising system can further comprise (1) home-page access means for enabling a user to access home pages of sponsors of the advertising data, based on the advertising data displayed by the display means; (2) order/request notification means for notifying an advertising data sponsor via the home page accessed by the user via the home-page access means of orders for products or requests for services included in the viewed advertising data; and (3) order/request-point notification means for notifying the point-number management means of the point number, based on products ordered or services requested using the order/request notification means.

In the present invention's advertising system, the electronic communications can be electronic mail employing the Internet, satellite communications, or both.

The above objects of the present invention will further be attained by an advertising method, using electronic communications means, that consists of the following steps: (a) inputting a user's personal data; (b) storing the personal data that has been input; (c) inputting advertising data; (d) storing the advertising data that has been input; (e) extracting from the stored advertising data specific advertising data that is tailored to the user, based on the stored personal data; (f) transmitting the extracted advertising data to the user via the electronic communications means; (g) notifying the user of the transmitted advertising data; (h) displaying the advertising data, based on directions for accessing data from the user; (i) identifying the type of advertising data displayed; (j) counting the number of access directions for displaying the advertising data; (k) calculating a fee for the displayed advertising data, based on the number of access directions counted; and (l) notifying the sponsor of the displayed advertising data of the advertising fees calculated.

The present invention's advertising method can further comprise the following steps: (a) converting the number of access directions for the counted advertising data to a point number; (b) accumulating and updating the point number for each user; (c) sorting and storing the updated point number for each user; and (d) notifying the user of the point number

and of various service data based on the point number.

The present invention's advertising method can further comprise the steps of (a) accessing the home page of an advertising-data sponsor, based on advertising data displayed by the user; (b) notifying the advertising-data sponsors via the home page accessed by the user of orders for products or requests for services included in the viewed advertising data; and (c) issuing a notification of the point numbers based on products ordered or services requested.

In the present invention's advertising method, the electronic communications can be electronic mail employing the Internet, satellite communications, or both.

4. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a block diagram showing the general configuration of an Internet advertising system serving as the preferred embodiment of the advertising system employing electronic communications according to the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a flowchart illustrating the operations of the Internet advertising system in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a continuation of the flowchart in Fig. 2;

Fig. 4 is a continuation of the flowchart in Fig. 3; and

Fig. 5 is a continuation of the flowchart in Fig. 4.

5. BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

An Internet advertising system according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention will be described while referring to the accompanying drawings.

Fig. 1 is a block diagram showing the general configuration of an Internet advertising system serving as the preferred embodiment of the advertising system employing electronic communications according to the present invention.

An Internet advertising system 10 (hereinafter referred to as "system") is configured to enable

users who are registered as members of the system to view advertising data, transmitted via e-mail, for stores and service providers taking part in a "virtual mall." The users can subsequently access the Websites of the stores and service providers corresponding to the advertising data viewed in the e-mail. The system 10 is also configured such that advertising data for stores and service providers other than those in the virtual mall (i.e., external stores) is transmitted to users via e-mail. When viewing the e-mail advertising data for these external stores and external service providers, the users can access the Websites corresponding to those stores and service providers.

Users that wish to access the system 10 of Fig. 1 are required to first register as members of the organization utilizing the system 10. Accordingly, the system 10 includes a terminal device 11 for enabling users to input personal data required for member registration into the system 10 in an interactive format. The system 10 is further provided with a personal-data database 13 that is connected to the terminal device 11 for storing personal data that users input via the terminal device 11.

The following data must be included in the personal data input by users via the terminal device 11 when the user registers for membership: 1. name, 2. address, 3. sex, 4. age, 5. telephone number, 6. e-mail address, and 7. hobbies/interests.

Personal data including the above items input by the user via the terminal device 11 are stored and accumulated in the personal-data database 12.

The system 10 further comprises an advertising-data input device 12 that enables the sponsors of advertisements to input advertising data into the system 10. The system 10 includes an advertising-data database 14 connected to the advertising-data input device 12 for storing advertising data that is input via the advertising-data input device 12. Advertising data input via the advertising-data input device 12 includes advertising data for stores and service providers taking part in the virtual mall, as well as advertising data for external stores and external service providers. When storing advertising data in the advertising-data database 14, it is necessary to differentiate the advertising data of stores and service providers in the virtual mall from the advertising data of those outside the virtual mall. This

point is described below.

The system 10 also includes an advertising-data searching/extracting device 15 and an advertising-data transmitter 16. The advertising-data searching/extracting device 15 searches the user personal-data database 12, searches the advertising-data database 14 based on the personal data of users noted as registered members in the user personal-data database 13(hereinafter referred to as "registered users"), and extracts advertising data adapted to the personal data of these registered users from the data stored in the advertising-data database 14. The advertising-data transmitter 16 transmits, via the Internet in the form of e-mail, to the terminal device 11 of the registered user the advertising data extracted by the advertising-data searching/extracting device 15.

The system 10 is further provided with (1) an advertising-data notification device 17 disposed on the terminal device 11 end, for notifying the registered user that advertising data has been received in the form of e-mail from the advertising-data transmitter 16, and (2) a display device 18 also disposed on the terminal device 11 end, for displaying on a display screen as a result of access directions (mouse clicks) by the registered user the advertising data announced by the advertising-data notification device 17.

The system 10 is also provided with (1) an advertising-data identification/counting device 19, for identifying each advertisement displayed on the display device 18 in response to mouse clicks by the user and for counting the number of times each advertisement is clicked (in other words, the number of times the data is displayed), and (2) an advertising-fee calculation/notification device 20, for calculating advertising fees based on the number of times each advertisement is clicked, as counted by the advertising-data identification/counting device 19, and for notifying the corresponding sponsors of the advertising fees periodically or with each access request.

The system 10 comprises (1) a point-number management device 21 for converting the number of clicks on each advertising data, as counted by the advertising-data identification/counting device 19, into a point number and then accumulating and updating the point number for each user; (2) a point-number database 22 for storing and accumulating the

point numbers accumulated and updated by the point-number management device 21, sorted according to user; and (3) a point-service notification device 23 for notifying each user of the point number stored in the point-number database 22 periodically or with each access request, as well as for notifying each user of various free services that are available according to the point number accumulated by the user.

The system 10 further comprises (1) a home-page access device 24 for accessing the Websites of the advertisement sponsors, based on the advertising data displayed on the display device 18; (2) an order/request notification device 25 for notifying the advertisement sponsor, via the home page accessed by the registered user using the home-page access device 24, of orders for products included in the viewed advertising data or of requests for services listed in the viewed advertising data; and (3) an order/request-point notification device 26 for notifying the point-number management device 21 of the point number of products ordered or services requested via the order/request notification device 25.

Next, the operations of the system 10 in Fig. 1 will be described in more detail with reference to Figs. 2–5.

A user wishing to use the system 10 registers for membership by entering personal data using the terminal device 11 (Step S1). This personal data includes the user's name, address, sex, age, telephone number, e-mail address, and hobbies/interests. As an example, the user enters the following: "Name: Taro Yamada; Sex: Male; Age: 28; Telephone number: 045-123-5678; E-mail address: TYAMADA@EMAIL.COM; Hobbies/Interests: cars, driving." The personal data for this user input via the terminal device 11 is transmitted to the database 12 and stored therein (Step S2).

Sponsors of advertising data can input desired advertising data using the advertising-data input device 12 (Step S3). For example, one sponsor is a company called A Automobiles, which has a store in the virtual mall. When A Automobiles inputs advertising data for an "Introduction and test-ride event for A Automobiles' new cars" using the advertising-data input device 12, the input advertising data is transmitted to the advertising-data database 14 and is stored therein (Step S4).

A sponsor of advertising data without a store in the virtual mall is a company called B Automobiles. When B Automobiles inputs advertising data regarding an "Introduction and test-ride event for B Automobiles' imported cars" via the advertising-data input device 12, the inputted advertising data is transmitted to the advertising-data database 14 and is stored therein (Step S5).

The advertising-data searching/extracting device 15 searches the database 12 for personal data and subsequently searches the advertising-data database 14 based on the personal data for Taro Yamada, a registered user stored in the database 12 (Step S6). The advertising-data searching/extracting device 15 extracts the advertising data regarding the "Introduction and test-ride event for A Automobiles new cars" and the "Introduction and test-ride event for B Automobiles imported cars," advertising data that conforms with the registered user Taro Yamada's personal data (Hobbies/Interests: cars), from the advertising data stored in the advertising-data database 14.

The advertising-data transmitter 16 transmits via e-mail, to the e-mail address TYAMADA@EMAIL.COM of the registered user Taro Yamada, the advertising data "Introduction and test-ride event for A Automobiles new cars" and "Introduction and test-ride event for B Automobiles imported cars" that has been extracted by the advertising-data searching/extracting device 15 (Step S7).

The advertising-data notification device 17 disposed on the terminal device 11 end notifies the registered user Taro Yamada that advertising data regarding an "Introduction and test-ride event for A Automobiles new cars" and an "Introduction and test-ride event for B Automobiles imported cars" has been sent to the TYAMADA@EMAIL.COM address via e-mail (Step S8). The display device 18 disposed on the terminal device 11 end displays, based on access directions (mouse clicks) within the e-mail messages sent to Taro Yamada, the advertising data "Introduction and test-ride event for A Automobiles new cars" and "Introduction and test-ride event for B Automobiles imported cars" that has been reported by the advertising-data notification device 17 (Step S9).

The advertising-data identification/counting device 19 identifies what type of data is displayed

on the display device 18 (Step S10). The advertising data "Introduction and test-ride event for A Automobiles new cars" is identified as advertising data of a member sponsor, because the sponsor of this data is A Automobiles, which has a store in the virtual mall. The advertising data "Introduction and test-ride event for B Automobiles imported cars" is identified as

- 5 advertising data of a nonmember sponsor because the sponsor of this data is B Automobiles, which is outside the virtual mall. The advertising-data identification/counting device 19 counts the number of times each advertising data "Introduction and test-ride event for A Automobiles new cars" and "Introduction and test-ride event for B Automobiles imported cars" is clicked (that is, the number of times the advertisements are displayed) by increasing an A-count and
- 10 B-count once for each click (Step S11). The advertising-fee calculation/notification device 20 calculates the advertising fee for each advertising data "Introduction and test-ride event for A Automobiles new cars" and "Introduction and test-ride event for B Automobiles imported cars" based on the number of A-count and B-count clicks counted by the advertising-data identification/counting device 19 (Step S12), and provides appropriate notification to A
- 15 Automobiles and B Automobiles, the sponsors of the advertising data (Step S13).

- The point-number management device 21 converts only the number of clicks A-count into a point number (Step S14), where A-count is the number of clicks counted by the advertising-data identification/counting device 19 for the advertising data "Introduction and test-ride event for A Automobiles new cars" provided by A Automobiles, because A Automobiles has a store
- 20 in the virtual mall. The point-number management device 21 updates the point number by the registered user Taro Yamada (Step S15). The point-number database 22 records the point number accumulated by the registered user Taro Yamada, as updated by the point-number management device 21 (Step S16). The point-service notification device 23 notifies Taro Yamada of the point number stored in the point-number database 22 (Step S17) and
 - 25 simultaneously informs Taro Yamada of various service-data offers that are available according to point number by Taro Yamada (Step S18).

Based on the advertising data "Introduction and test-ride event for A Automobiles new cars" displayed in the display device 18, the registered user Taro Yamada uses the home-page access device 24 to access the home page of A Automobiles (Step S19). Taro Yamada

further uses the order/request notification device 25 to notify A Automobiles that he is considering the purchase from A Automobiles of a new car included in the advertising data "Introduction and test-ride event for A Automobiles new cars" (Step S20). The notification is sent via the Website of A Automobiles, which is accessed by the home-page access device

- 5 24. If, after test-driving the car, Taro Yamada decides to actually purchase from A Automobiles a new car that is one of the new products listed in the advertising data, the point-number database 22 notifies the point-number management device 21 of the point number based on Taro Yamada's prior notification (of his desire to purchase a new car from A Automobiles) that was made (in Step S20) through the order/request notification device 25.
- 10 Accordingly, the point number by Taro Yamada is updated (Step S22) and recorded in the point-number database 22 in (Step S23). At the same time, the point-service notification device 23 notifies Taro Yamada both of the updated point number by him and stored in the point-number database 22 (Step S24) and of various service-data offers that are available based on the point number that he has accumulated (Step S25).
- 15 Next, the main services and member privileges for the Internet advertising system of the present invention will be described.

I. Registered Member

A. Privileges of registered members

- 20 1. Registered users can purchase products or enjoy services in the virtual mall at special members-only prices.
2. Members receive cash-back points for products purchased at special member-only prices.

B. Benefits when a registered member views the home pages of an advertiser

- 25 A registered member receives one point for each advertisement viewed on an advertiser's Website if the advertiser has a store in the virtual mall.

C. Benefits when a registered member receives advertisements by e-mail

A registered member receives two points if he or she actually clicks on an

advertisement received by e-mail and views the advertising data.

II. Sponsors of Advertising Data

A. Low-cost high-efficiency advertising data

Unlike the conventional Internet advertising method of guaranteed exposure rates, the

- 5 Internet advertising system of the present invention only subjects an advertiser to advertising fees when its Web page had actually been viewed.

In other words, because the system of the present invention employs a number-of-clicks type Internet advertising method, a sponsor pays advertising fees to the advertising system provider according to the number of times registered users access the advertiser's Website.

- 10 For example, if an Internet advertisement leads to 10,000 accesses of the advertiser's home page, at a rate of ¥3 per access, the advertiser pays a fee of ¥30,000 to the system provider. If absolutely no accesses result from the advertisement, the advertising fee is ¥0.

Further, the Internet advertising system of the present invention can transmit directly to the registered user by e-mail specific Internet advertising data that is tailored for each user,

- 15 based on the registered user's personal data. For example, using the "address" data for registered users, the system can transmit Internet advertisements targeting only registered users living in a specific area. Retailers such as buckwheat-noodle shops, grocers, and butchers, who rely heavily on local customers, can provide effective Internet advertisements to specific locales, thereby efficiently using the Internet advertising system of the present
20 invention.

B. Combined Use with a Debit System

The Internet advertising system of the present invention can be combined with a debit system to expand the scope of applications for point accounts used in the virtual mall. Point accounts can be linked online to actual bank accounts. Hence, the system is configured such that

- 25 registered users not only can shop in the virtual mall, but also can use points accumulated when shopping at normal convenience stores and department stores. Further, points accumulated in point accounts can be used for withdrawing cash and the like from ATMs, just

like from normal bank accounts.

In the embodiment described above, the present invention is described using the Internet as the means of electronic communications, but the present invention is not limited to this type of electronic communications. For example, a communications satellite or other electronic
5 communications means can be employed. Further, in the present invention, the Internet can include a satellite-based Internet.

The present invention's advertising system comprises (1) a terminal means for allowing a user to input personal data for registration in an interactive format; (2) a personal-data storage means connected to the terminal means, for storing the personal data that is input
10 from the terminal means; (3) an advertising-data input means for inputting advertising data; (4) an advertising-data storage means connected to the advertising-data input means, for storing the advertising data inputted from the advertising-data input means; (5) an advertising-data extraction means, for extracting from advertising data stored in the advertising-data storage means specific advertising data that conforms to personal data of
15 the user, based on the user's personal data that is stored in the personal-data storage means; (6) an advertising-data transmission means, for transmitting to the terminal means of the user via electronic communications the advertising data that is extracted by the advertising-data extraction means; (7) an advertising-data notification means, for notifying the user that advertising data has been transmitted from the advertising-data transmission
20 means; (8) a display means for displaying the advertising data notified by the advertising-data notification means according to access directions by the user; (9) advertising-data identification/counting means, for identifying each advertising data that is displayed on the display means according to the access directions, and for counting the number of directions given to access each advertising data; and (10) an advertising-fee calculation/notification
25 means for calculating advertising fees, based on the number of access directions for each advertising data, as counted by the advertising-data identification/counting means, and for notifying the sponsor of each advertising data of the advertising fee. Accordingly, the present invention is capable both of determining whether a user has actually accessed supplied advertising data and of accommodating advertisement sponsors that wish to provide

advertising data under a limited budget.

The present invention's advertising method comprises the following steps: (1) inputting personal data relating to the user; (2) storing the personal data that has been input; (3) inputting advertising data; (4) storing the advertising data that has been input; (5) extracting from the stored advertising data specific advertising data this is tailored to the user, based on the user's personal data that has been stored; (6) transmitting the extracted advertising data to the user via the electronic communications; (7) notifying the user of the transmitted advertising data; (8) displaying the advertising data, based on directions for accessing data from the user; (9) identifying the type of displayed advertising data; (10) counting the number of access directions for displaying the advertising data; (11) calculating a fee for the displayed advertising data, based on the number of access directions counted; and (12) notifying the sponsor of the displayed advertising data of the calculated advertising fee. Accordingly, the present invention is capable both of determining whether a user has actually accessed supplied advertising data and of accommodating advertisement sponsors who wish to provide advertising data under a limited budget.

CLAIMS

1. An advertising system using electronic communications, with the system comprising:
 - terminal means for allowing a user to input personal data for registration in an interactive format;
 - 5 personal-data storage means, connected to the terminal means, for storing the personal data inputted from the terminal means;
 - advertising-data input means for inputting advertising data;
 - advertising-data storage means connected to the advertising-data input means for storing the advertising data inputted from the advertising-data input means;
 - 10 advertising-data extraction means for extracting from advertising data stored in the advertising-data storage means specific advertising data that conforms to personal data of the user, based on the user's personal data that is stored in the personal-data storage means;
 - advertising-data transmission means for transmitting to the terminal means of the user via
 - 15 electronic communications the advertising data that has been extracted by the advertising-data extraction means;
 - advertising-data notification means for notifying the user that advertising data has been transmitted from the advertising-data transmission means;
 - display means for displaying, according to access directions by the user, the advertising
 - 20 data notified by the advertising-data notification means;
 - advertising-data identification/counting means for identifying each item of advertising data displayed on the display means according to the access directions and for counting the number of directions given to access each advertising data; and
 - advertising-fee calculation/notification means for calculating the advertising fees based on
 - 25 the number of access directions for each advertising data counted by the advertising-data identification/counting means and for notifying sponsors of each advertising data of the advertising fee.
2. An advertising system using electronic communications as recited in Claim 1, with the

system further comprising:

point-number management means for converting the number of directions for accessing each item of advertising data counted by the advertising-data identification/counting means into a point number and for accumulating and updating the point number for each user;

- 5 point-number storage means for sorting and storing the point number by each user, as updated by the point-number management means; and

point-service notification means for notifying the user of the number of points stored in the point-number storage means and of various service-data offers based on the point number.

3. An advertising system using electronic communications as recited in Claim 2, with the
10 system further comprising:

home-page access means for enabling the user to access home pages of sponsors of the advertising data, based on the advertising data displayed by the display means;

- order/request notification means for notifying advertising-data sponsors, via the home page accessed by the user via the home-page access means, of orders for products or
15 requests for services included in the viewed advertising data; and

order/request-point notification means for notifying the point-number management means of the point number, based on the products ordered or services requested by a user using the order/request notification means.

4. An advertising system using electronic communications as recited in Claim 1, wherein
20 the electronic communications is electronic mail employing the Internet, satellite communications, or both.

5. An advertising method using electronic communications, comprising the steps of:

inputting personal data relating to the user;

storing the inputted personal data;

- 25 inputting advertising data;

storing the advertising data that has been input;

extracting advertising data that is tailored to the user from the stored advertising data, based on the stored personal data relating to the user;

transmitting the extracted advertising data to the user via the electronic communications;

notifying the user of the transmitted advertising data;

displaying the advertising data, based on directions from the user for accessing data;

identifying the type of displayed advertising data;

5 counting the number of access directions for displaying the advertising data;

calculating a fee for the displayed advertising data, based on the number of access
directions counted; and

notifying the sponsor of the displayed advertising data of the calculated advertising fee.

6. An advertising method using electronic communications as recited in Claim 5, further
10 comprising the steps of:

converting the number of access directions for the counted advertising data to a point
number;

accumulating and updating the point number for each user;

sorting and storing the updated point number for each user; and

15 notifying the user of the number of stored points and various service-data offers based on
the point number.

7. An advertising method using electronic communications as recited in Claim 6, further
comprising the steps of:

20 accessing the home page of the advertising-data sponsor, based on advertising data
displayed by the user;

notifying the sponsor of the advertising data, via the home page accessed by the user, of
orders for products or requests for services included in the viewed advertising data; and

issuing a notification of the point number based on products ordered or services
requested.

25 8. An advertising method using electronic communications as recited in Claim 5, wherein
the electronic communications is electronic mail employing the Internet, satellite
communications, or both.

Fig. 1

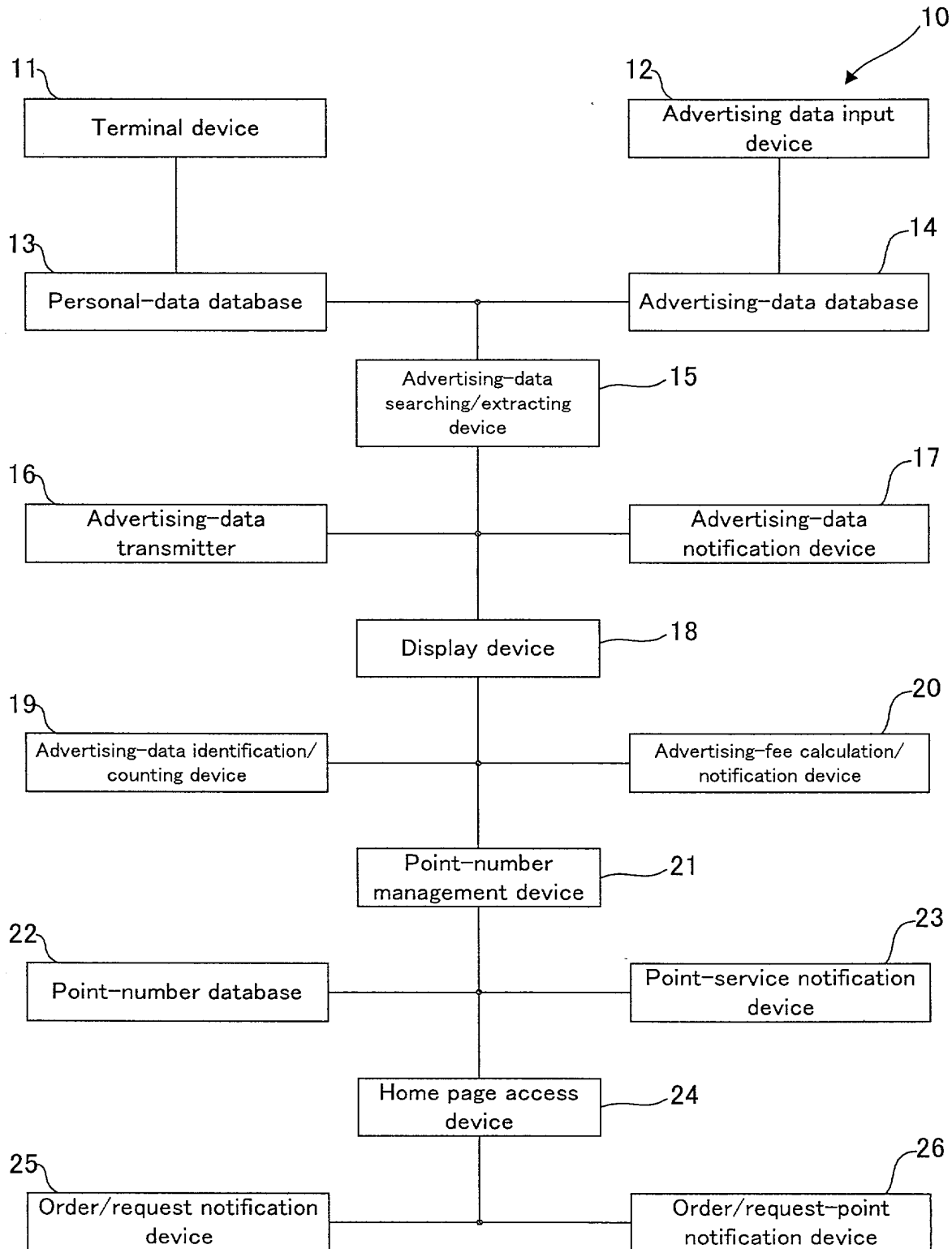


Fig. 2

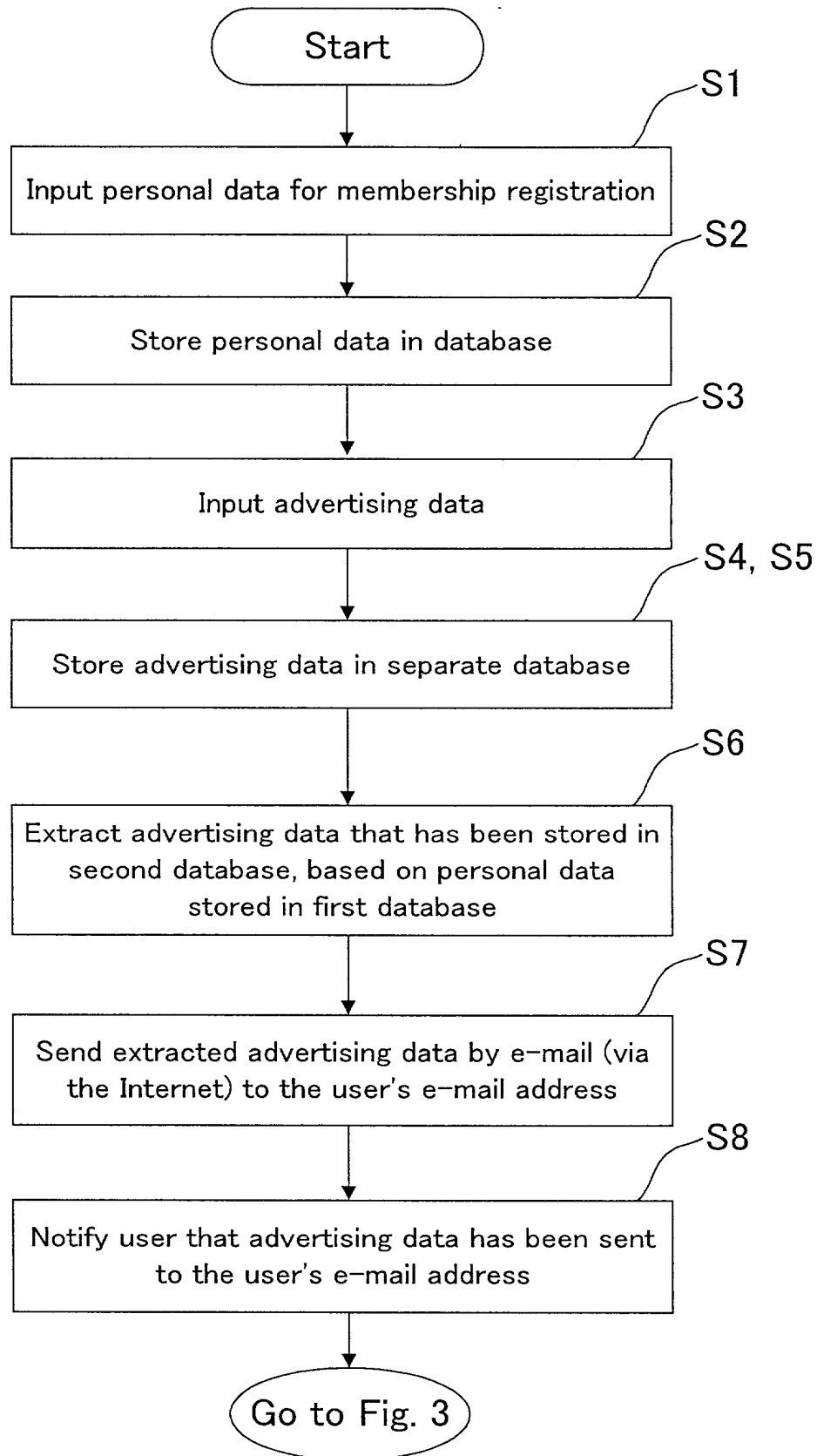


Fig. 3

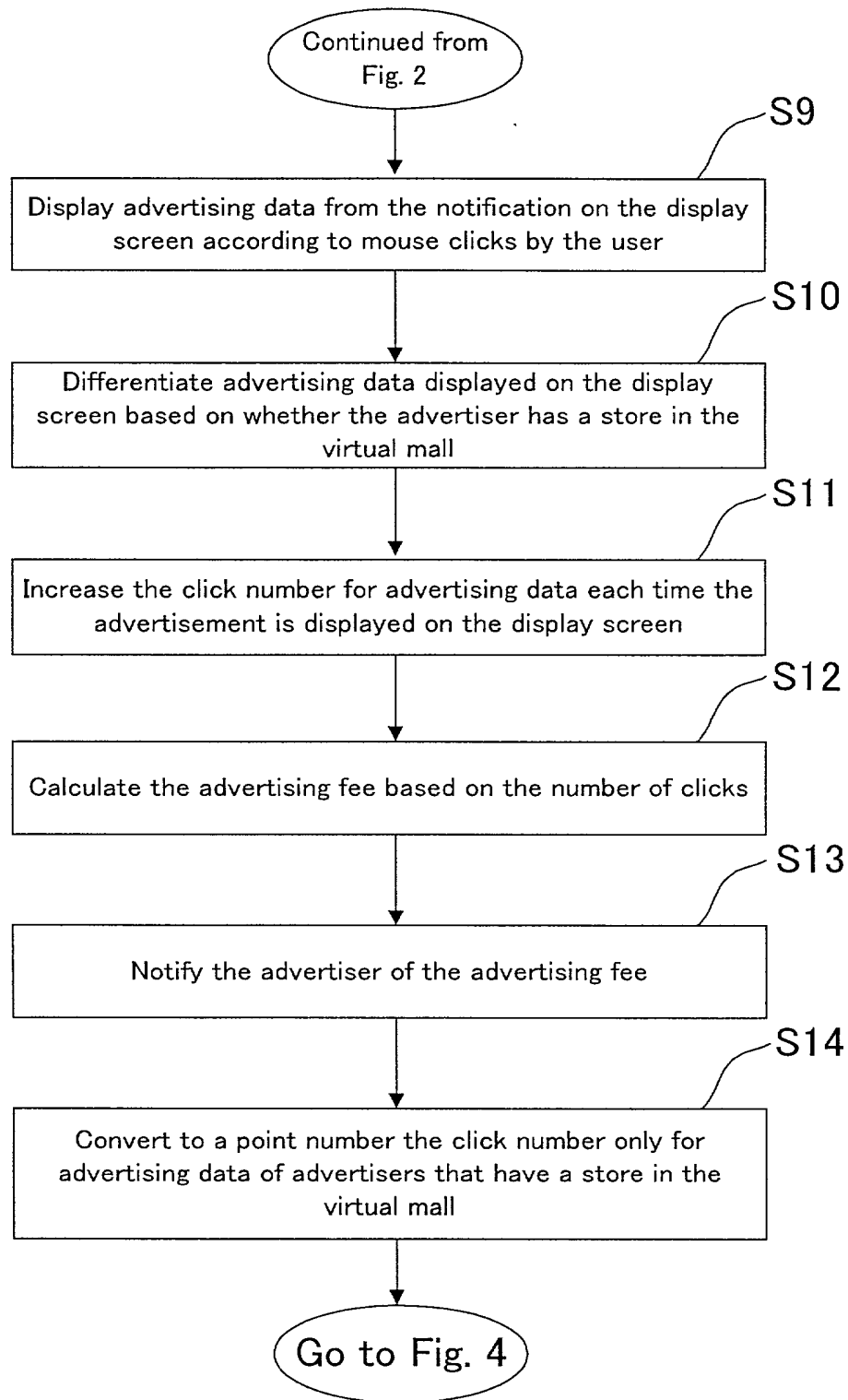


Fig. 4

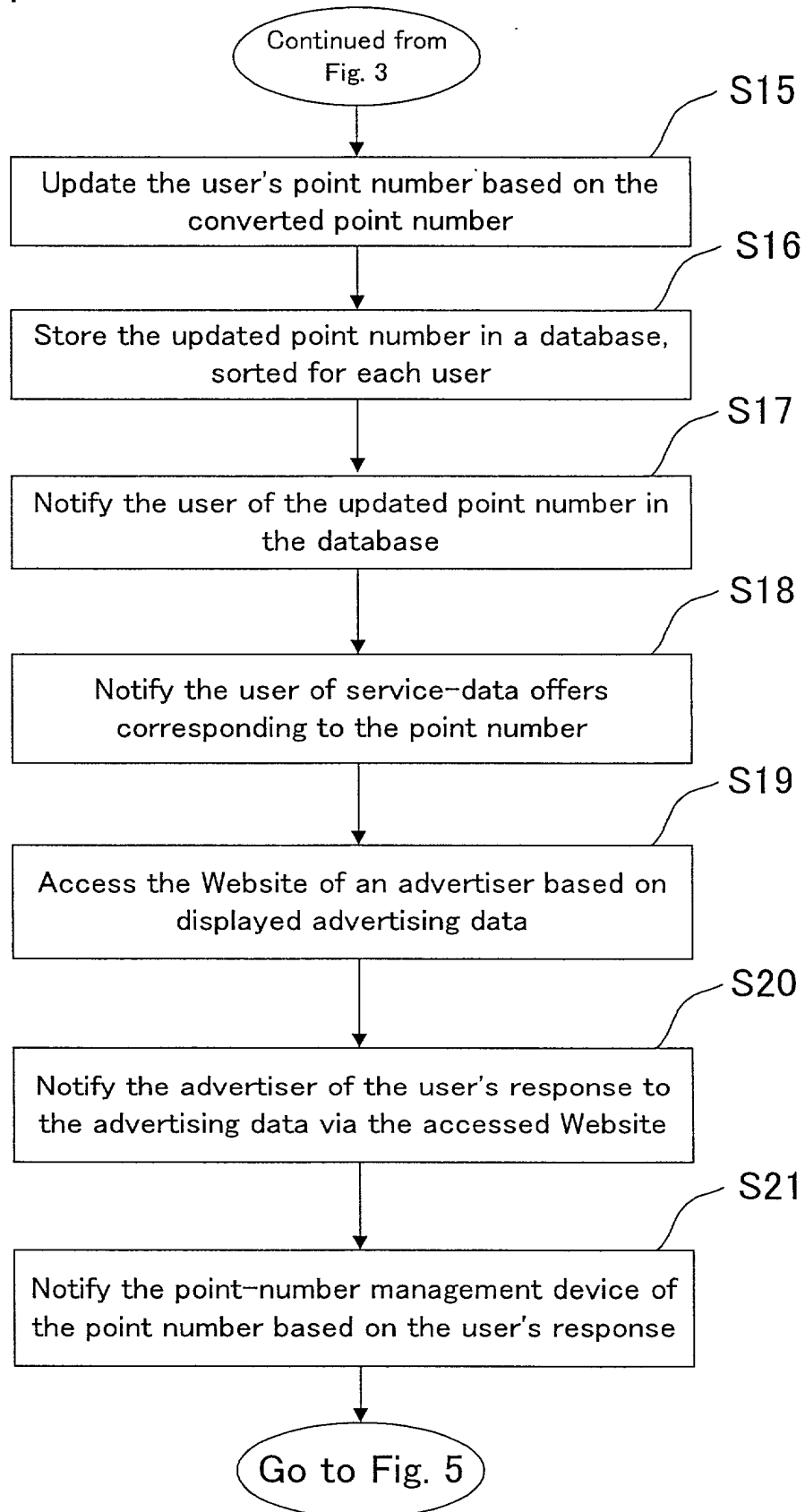
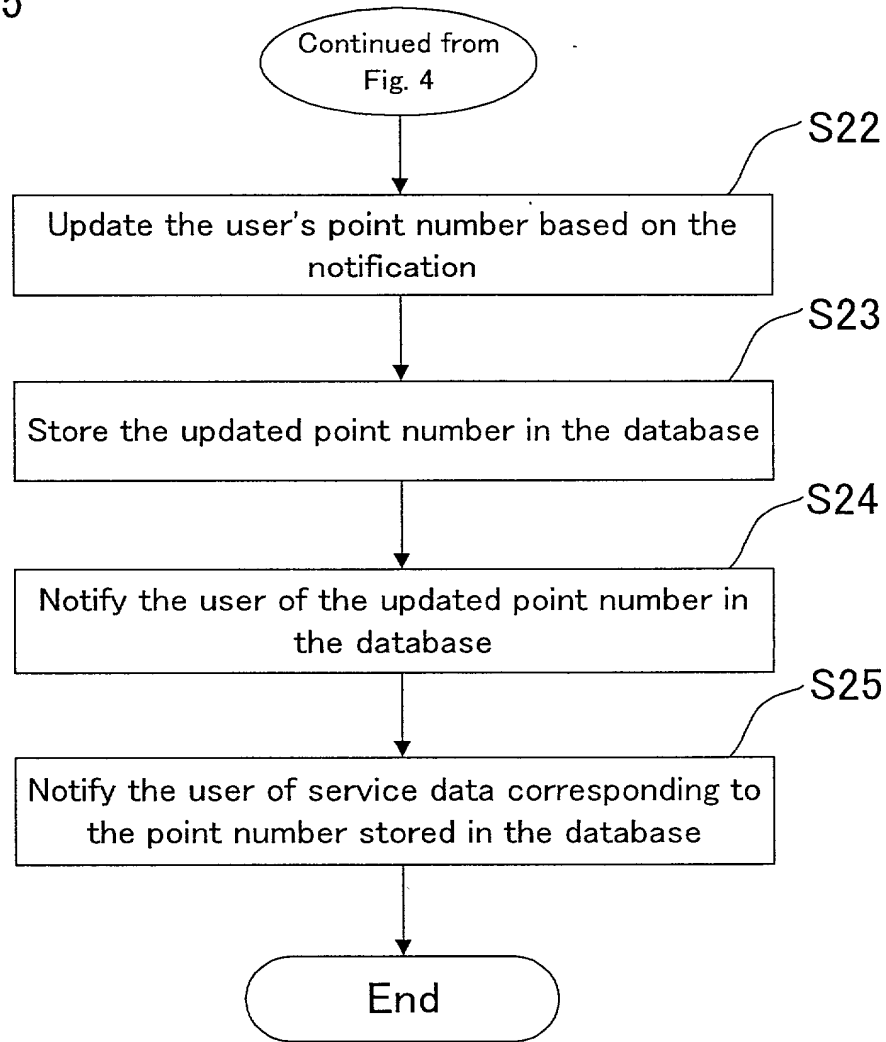


Fig. 5



Docket No.:

DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office and citizenship are as stated below next to my name,

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled Advertising System and Method Using Electronic Communications

the specification of which

☒ is attached hereto ☐ was filed on _____ as Application Serial No. _____ and was amended on _____ (if applicable)

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is known to me to be material to patentability in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119(a)-(d) or Section 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or Section 365(a) of any PCT international application which designated at least one country other than the United States, listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s):

Number	Country	Day/Month/Year filed	Priority Claimed Yes No
H11-168237	Japan	15/06/1999	X

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 USC §119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

Prior Provisional Application(s):

Application Number	Filing Date
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I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, Section 120 of any United States application(s), or Section 365(c) of any PCT international application designating the United States, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT international application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, Section 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56 which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

Prior U. S. Application(s):

Serial No.	Filing Date	Status: Patented, Pending, Abandoned
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I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s): Allan M. Lowe, Reg. No. 19,641; Benjamin J. Hauptman, Reg. No. 29,310; Israel Gopstein, Reg. No. 27,333; Kenneth M. Berner, Reg. No. 37,093; Michael G. Gilman, Reg. No. 19,114; Albert J. Fasulo II, Reg. No. 43,607; and Randy Noranbrock, Reg. No. 42,940, all of

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with full power of substitution and revocation, to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith, and all future correspondence should be addressed to them.

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Date:

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Inventor's signature:

Date:

Residence:

Citizenship:

Post Office Address: